I Want to Hear

By Ali Haidar

Once, in a small city called Kinda, lived a man named Tike.

Tike was a kind-hearted person who always prioritized peace over violence. The town he lived in was poor, but filled with kind souls. Tike loved animals and protected them whenever he could.

He liked animals — but he wasn't a vegetarian. He ate meat, though only from specific animals.

One day, on his way home, he noticed a thunderstorm building in the sky. The wind was spinning wildly, throwing thunderbolts around like angry sparks.

Tike's eyes widened. His jaw dropped. His body began to shake. His feet froze in place. He couldn't move.

Then, something black appeared in front of him.

It stood like a human, but had only one foot — with two fingers, and each finger looked like a hand. Its body was shaped like that single, bizarre foot, standing at human height. Its head was umbrella-shaped, with nine pins extending from it — and each pin had a red eye, and each eye had a mouth on top of it.

The creature was completely black, except for its eyes — glowing, deep red. The sun was setting in the background.

Suddenly, all nine mouths spoke in unison:
"What's your one and only wish?"

Tike couldn't move his lips.

The creature screamed,
"Are you deaf?"

The sound was so loud it pushed Tike two steps back.

In a trembling, frightened voice, Tike finally said,
"I… I want to hear what normal people can't hear."

"Granted," the creature replied in a satisfied tone.

As soon as it spoke, something invisible — like wind, but solid as stone — hit Tike in the chest.

He gasped and woke up.

Both hands clutched his chest. He was breathing heavily, his eyes wide open, scanning the darkness of his room.

He turned on the light beside his bed, reaching for a water bottle. His throat was dry, choking his breath. He drank some water, then sat still for a while, trying to calm down.

Eventually, he left the room.

It was morning. Sunlight filled the house. But… he had no shadow.

For a few moments, everything was silent. He took a deep breath, trying to convince himself it had all been a dream.

Suddenly, he heard a soft, delicate voice:
“I wish I was still alive.”

Tike looked around, shocked — but there was no one.

The voice came again:
“My body is lying on the ground… hopelessly.”

He rubbed his ears, thinking it was just the echo of his dream still lingering.

Then another soft, crying voice whispered,
“Why can’t I feel myself?”

Tike couldn’t ignore it anymore. He searched for the source of the voice. That’s when he noticed a dead rabbit lying in the garden.

He walked toward it slowly.

As he stood over it, he heard the voice again — sweet, but filled with sorrow:
“I’m completely gone…”

Tike whispered,
“Are you… the rabbit?”

The voice responded,
“Oh… did someone call me? Am I alive? Or… are you also dead?”